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In the June number of The Classical Journal Professor Tenney Frank contributes an interesting article on Poetic Diction in Latin Verse, which is to be commended to all teachers of Vergil. In a great deal of the teaching of Vergil in our schools its poetical element, while possibly felt, is not expounded, and Professor Frank does well to call attention to the fact that Vergil is a great poet not merely by what he says, but by the way in which he says it.

The main point of Professor Frank's paper is to show that one of the chief characteristics of English poets of the classical age, such as Pope, and the one which contributes more than anything else to their artificiality, viz. the common employment of adjectives with substantives, which is usually attributed to the careless imitation of poets like Lucan and Statius, is shared by Vergil as well. Whether Pope is tiresome and artificial by reason of an ignorant imitation of classical models I do not feel disposed to discuss. I imagine that most of Pope's critics would give their heads to be able to write like him, and I likewise imagine that few would deny him the glory of being the most finished wielder of English verse that the English language has seen.

A study of Vergil's vocabulary shows that it is, as was to be expected, very largely a prose vocabulary. When he wrote he had to take the Latin language as he found it, and no little credit belongs to him for having been able to employ a prose vocabulary for the purpose of high poetry. This is accomplished largely by the figurative use of words, but particularly by his employment of adjectives with substantives. The true poet sees in color just as the painter does and the only means of expressing color in a language of recent development is the adjective. Most teachers as well as pupils fail to appreciate this characteristic of Vergil's poetry. A careful study of it will add a great deal to their rational enjoyment of the greatest Roman poet.

Professor Frank quotes in illustration of the differences as well as the similarities between the Vergilian diction and that of Pope the following passages: Verg. Aen. 7. 8-36

aspirant aurae in noctem nec candida cursus
luna negat, splendet tremulo sub lumine pontus.
Proxima Circaeae raduntur litora terrae,
dives inaccessos ubi Solis filia lucos
adsiduo resonat cantu, tectisque superbis
urit odoratam nocturna in lumina cedrum
arguto tenuis percurrens pectine telas.

quae ne monstra pii paterentur talia Troes
delati in portus neu litora dira subirent,
Neptunus ventis implevit vela secundis,
atque fugam dedit et praeter vada fervida vexit.
et in lento luctantur marmore tonsae.

flectere iter sociis terraque advertere proras
imperat et laetus fluvio succedit opaco.

Pope, Fourth Pastoral, 2. 45-52.

No grateful dews descend from ev'ning skies,
Nor morning odours from the flow'rs arise;
No rich perfumes refresh the fruitful field,
Nor fragrant herbs their native incense yield.
The balmy zephyrs, silent since her death,
Lament the ceasing of a sweeter breath;
Th' industrious bees neglect their golden store;
Fair Daphne's dead, and sweetness is no more.

He then comments: "(In Pope) the adjectives are usually the most obvious ones: if erased, they could easily be replaced by the most prosaic of readers. They contain hardly a suggestion that does not readily arise from the connotation of the nouns. Perfumes are usually 'rich', the normal field is 'fruitful'; poetry knows only of 'fragrant' herbs; zephyrs have been 'balmy' and bees 'industrious' these many centuries. . . . In the lines of the Aeneid just referred to, *candida*, *tremulo*, *inaccessos*, *adsiduo*, *nocturna*, *dira*, *lento*, *opaco*, are neither otiose nor undistinguished in their respective contexts. This is only saying that Vergil, for all his classicism, reveals an imagination that Pope does not".

We may disagree with Professor Frank's judgment as to the quality of these adjectives, and to my mind 'morning' is no less (nor more) otiose than *nocturna* and 'fragrant' than *tremulo*; but the

important fact that he emphasizes is that the Latin has in its possibilities of word order due to inflection a means of varying the monotony that the English has not; so "in the passage from the Aeneid referred to, only five times out of a possible thirty-three does the noun stand adjacent to the adjective. In turning that passage into English, most translators would unite the adjective and the noun in all of the thirty-three instances. The result would be destructive of all enjoyment. Vergil reads like Pope at once. Not even the beauty of the epithets can save the passage. The real difference therefore lies in the structure of the two languages".

Professor Frank's conclusion is: "It must be made clear that it is impossible to translate every descriptive adjective of Vergil by an English adjective. The spirit of our language forbids it. Some of these adjectives may be thrown into the position of attributes or into relative clauses; at times a more vigorous verb or a more highly colored noun may be found to compensate for their suppression; at times we must either boldly prune them away and endure the loss without compensation, or we must attempt to make up for it by a shift of emphasis. And all this only goes to enforce the never too much emphasized contention that, since translations are at best inadequate and misleading, students should be induced as early as possible to enjoy their Latin poets in the original".

CLASS-ROOM COMPREHENSION OF CICERO¹

I beg your indulgence for what is not a cogent demonstration, nor a coherent, balanced monograph, but a loose and discursive presentation of some of the minor devices by which I endeavor to bring my pupils to a comprehension of what they are reading. At the outset I desire to make it perfectly clear that by comprehension I mean that kind of comprehension which reaches not only the mind but the feelings and gives some inkling of the emotion inherent in or implicit beneath the mere meaning of the words. I strive, perhaps vainly, but I trust, not always in vain, to wake in my pupils some echo, however far and faint, of the tingling thrill which ran through the unwilling and incredulous marrow of Cicero's hearers, even of those least receptive, most indifferent, or most contemptuously hostile.

Some one has said that the difficulty with Vergil is to translate him after one has understood him, that the difficulty with Cicero is to understand him after one has translated him. For my part I find in each author, now the one difficulty, now the other,

and, indeed, sometimes both at once; yet I recognize the general truth of the observation and propose here to dwell upon the difficulty of comprehending the full significance of many passages in the stock orations of Cicero, even after a satisfactory translation has been made—upon the difficulty of conveying to an ordinary schoolroom class any genuine realization of the spiritual and emotional import of Cicero's eloquence.

To impart to an American schoolboy any real grasp of the impression of Cicero's stylistic manner is so nearly impossible that it is scarcely worth attempting. The boy has trouble enough with the purport of the matter. I shall now try to show how I endeavor to lead those specimens of the American schoolboy who fall under my care to as close a comprehension of the meaning of what Cicero said as they are capable of forming.

I venture, somewhat timidly, to begin by dissenting from what I believe to be the very general practice of commencing with the Catilinarian orations. Boys who have read only three books of Caesar, most of whom have read only five, and none of whom has read more than that amount of prose with perhaps a little of Nepos and Sallust, are, I feel, poorly fitted to comprehend what on earth was the meaning of Cicero's first outburst against Catiline. For myself, I prefer to begin my classes with the speech on the Manilian Law. After a deliberate and careful reading of that oration, a fairly sensible boy ought to have some idea of what was at stake in the intrigue of which the Catilinarian speeches were the culmination and are the most notable record. I have found my practice entirely successful, as far as I myself am capable of judging. The exordium of the Manilian Law is indeed rhetorical, artificial and involved. From my point of view this is rather an advantage. Boys forget much of their Latin during their summer holiday. Normally healthy boys ought to be expected to forget most of the drier grammatical details. A syntactical shake-up at the beginning of the school-year is no bad commencement of the year's work. To grind hard at the grammar for a while, to analyze minutely, is good for both teacher and pupils. The exordium of the Manilian Law offers a fine field for this sort of exercise.

In reading Cicero, all the way through the year, it is my practice to require the pupil called on to tell the mood of each verb in the sentence he is about to translate, and to state the reason for the mood. If he does this with a colorable approach to accuracy he is given an opportunity to translate the sentence. If he fumbles and bungles over this analysis he never gets any chance to try to translate

¹ This paper was presented at the meeting of the Classical Association of the Middle States and Maryland, at New York, April 27, 1907.